

Tour of National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, ID

Rundown: Tour of the NIFC facility with a specific emphasis on smoke management.

Top-Level Background:

- EPA works closely with its federal and state partners to achieve clean air and address the air quality impacts of fires throughout the United States.
- EPA, through its Office of Air and Radiation, is working with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior to consider updating a January 2017 partnership agreement between the three agencies regarding wildland fire and air quality.
- EPA also provides a way to be sure that when “exceptional events” like wildfires and high wind events affect an air monitoring site, we don’t punish states. Under the Clean Air Act, states are not responsible for reducing emissions that are not in their control. Since 2016, EPA has received and acted upon more than 20 “exceptional event” demonstrations, and nearly all of which concurred with state recommendations.
- EPA also recognizes and supports the use of prescribed fires as an important tool to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires and mitigate adverse impacts to public health, safety and property. We have worked closely with federal land management agencies that use prescribed fires to foster collaboration with state and local air agencies in the development of prescribed burn plans and appropriate communications regarding public safety to reduce the potential for exposure.
- As part of its commitment to protecting public health, EPA believes that it is important to provide information on air quality to the American public at all times and in all circumstances, including during major events like wildfires. EPA’s AirNow system receives real-time data from state and local air agencies monitors enabling access to data for the public and firefighters. AirNow also features a dynamic “fire map” showing any monitors deployed for fire events.